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Memorial Addresses

of

Companion Brevet Brigadier General B. R. Cowen

and

Companion Wm. R. Collins

Delivered at the

Annual Memorial Service

Commandery of Ohio,

Military Order of the Loyal Legion

of the United States

at

St. Paul's M. E. Church, Cincinnati

May 3, 1903.

Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States.

Headquarters Commandery of the State of Ohio.

CINCINNATI, June 15, 1903.

The Memorial Addresses of Companion Brevet Brig. General B. R. Cowen and Companion William R. Collins, delivered at the Annual Memorial Service of this Commandery, at St. Paul's M. E. Church, Cincinnati, on Sunday evening, May 3, 1903, are printed and distributed under resolution adopted at the Annual Meeting, May 6, 1903.

W. R. THRALL,
Recorder.

ADDRESS OF
COMPANION BVT. BRIG. GENERAL B. R. COWEN.

There is a something in association which always tempts me, when I stand in a place like this, to do as the regular minister does, and select a text for such remarks as may follow. And as I know of no legal prohibition civil or ecclesiastical, of such a proceeding, I ask your attention for a few minutes to a text to be found in the 11th verse of the 20th chapter of the First Book of Kings:

"Let not him that girdeth on his armor boast himself as he that putteth it off."

The author of that injunction was in no sense a model ruler, nor a model man. On the contrary he never could have been a member of the Ohio Commandery of the Loyal Legion for many good and sufficient reasons. But at the time he gave that injunction he was under the special favor of Almighty God who was giving him one more trial.

However, be that as it may, the injunction was wise and good, though, like a good many public speakers, both lay and clerical, King Ahab was something like the fingerboard at the parting of the ways which faithfully points the right way, but never travels that way itself.

The Companions whose names are specially in our thoughts to-night, and in whose memory we are drawn together by a common patriotic impulse on this holy day, as was becoming to good soldiers, put off their armor only when they passed from this life into the great beyond.

Their account here is closed and we may contemplate their lives as a well rounded and completed whole. They were tried and not found wanting; tried in the thrice-heated furnace of a mighty war, where men fought and bled and died for a great principle, where the life of a Nation, the

prosperity of a people were at stake; tried in the many and diverse vicissitudes of an active and strenuous civil life with its carking cares, its weighty responsibilities and demoralizing influences; tried in the manifold and insidious temptations of social life so often tending to weaken the moral fibre and sap the manhood, and that they were not found wanting is proved in the fact that they were honored members of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion.

The armor which they girded on when the heyday in their blood was fierce and bounding, the form stalwart and the eye bright, has fallen from the nerveless arm and from the shrunken form as it stooped to enter "the low, green tent whose curtain never outward swings." So that as soldiers in war, as citizens in peace, as friends and companions and neighbors, in every relation of life they have won the encomium: "Well done, good and faithful servants," and have entered on their reward.

How can we best honor the memories of these Companions now that they have answered the final roll call here and awakened to the reveille of the eternal morning?

They and those who have preceded them in the never ending procession passing within the veil devoted their young lives to their country forty years ago, and, their duty done in that behalf as soldiers, their work accomplished with honor, devoted their matured powers as patriotic citizens to the development and betterment of the institutions they had offered their lives to defend and preserve.

Could they tell us their wishes they would certainly insist that we so live and act as to perpetuate and strengthen and elevate a form of government and a code of conduct for which they risked so much; that we seek out and endeavor to establish that policy best calculated to improve the moral and intellectual condition of the people, which is, after all, the best way, if not the only way, to increase the real strength and prosperity of a nation.

We can, therefore, best honor these memories by emulating their virtues, carrying on to completion their commendable enterprises, and in the effort to make our lives what they should be.

The civil war was a mere episode in the history of the nation and in the lives of those actively engaged in it. Life since the war has been, to the most of you, a more strenuous struggle than the battles and marches in which you took part. The odds against you have often been greater, death has been near many times and your courage has been as severely tried as when "the scream of shot and burst of shell" scattered panic and death. So that life is a continuous conflict.

While it is much to have been a brave soldier in war, it is sometimes more to be a brave and faithful citizens in peace, for

> "Peace hath her victories
> No less renowned than war."

One who constantly looks backward across the intervening years to the scenes and incidents of the war, and finds nothing in his life to be proud of except the part he bore in the great struggle, unmindful of the never ending conflict between the forces of good and evil which rages wherever humanity dwells in which he has borne no part, though he may have been the bravest of the brave in the dash and glory of the battle field can hardly expect to rank as a good soldier in the highest and best sense of the word.

We should be careful not to fall into the too common error that courage and patriotism and love of country have relation only to war time and battle fields. They have a far more comprehensive meaning which all men should understand.

That a man was a soldier and fought for his country in no sense exempts him from serving his country with equal fidelity and courage in time of peace in such place and manner as will best promote his country's welfare, and the good of his fellows. The heroism of private life often exceeds that required of the soldier in active service. The theory of army organization and discipline is that every soldier in the ranks stands ready at all times and under all circumstances to make the supreme sacrifice if need be, and if he fail when called on his disgrace is indelibly fixed.

But, in time of peace, unfortunately, there is no such

theory in respect of the duties of a citizen and the result is that cowardice is the rule and goes unpunished, if not unnoticed.

I will not admit of any superior in respect for and admiration of the heroism and sacrifices of our soldiers and I always feel like saluting the maimed veteran, but I have greater admiration for the moral hero in civil life who has the courage to live up to the highest standard of duty and to follow that standard day after day, in prosperity and adversity, through a life time, in spite of boycott and social ostracism and ridicule.

If every soldier of our great civil war had been as true to the highest and best interests of the country and society since the war as he was during the period of enlistment do you not think we would now have a better condition of things in many respects in all our communities? To such men the world has ever pointed with pride, and when they put off their armor has truly mourned their departure and kept their memory green. Of such it could well be said, as Carlyle said of Sir Walter Scott: "When he departed he took a man's life with him."

The French have an expression which contains the idea I would convey: *Noblesse oblige;* meaning that certain obligations attach necessarily to patents of nobility not expected elsewhere. He who risked his life for his country is in a certain sense ennobled, and therefore incurs peculiar obligations to society which he cannot shirk without disgrace.

Nearly all the great titles of the old world date from the career of some successful soldier. If it conferred nobility to have fought at Fontenay, at Agincourt or at Waterloo, how much more were those ennobled who followed the flag at Gettysburg, at Vicksburg or at Shiloh? Those obligations should hold us to the faithful discharge of the highest duties of citizenship.

The same qualities which make the good soldier will make the good citizen. Submission to legal authority and a well ordered life are as much the duty of the citizen as of the soldier. It was these qualities in our soldiers which gave us

a conquering army. It is the same qualities in our citizens which insure a peaceful, happy and prosperous government.

The greatness of the greatest soldier is dimmed and disappears in the presence of the greatness of principle. Washington is greater and better known because of his wisdom as a ruler than for his skill as a soldier. John Howard, the martyr to humanity, Owen Lovejoy, the martyr to freedom, Savonarola, the martyr to religious liberty; the unfaltering champion of unpopular truth, who, alone, unsupported and despised, lives and endures, calmly and resolutely, the most prolonged and exquisite persecution which a single recanting word might avoid, is as far above and beyond the mere soldier as the sky is above the earth. The poet understood it for the purposes of the lesson he would teach when he wrote:

> "While Valor's haughty champions wait,
> Till all their scars are shown,
> Love walks unchallenged through the gate
> And sits beside the throne."

The story of a noble life is the best of all moral tonics; the most effective of all teaching; the most persuasive and inspiring of all human influences. Such stories render heroism and nobility of character contagious. The great man, if he also have a great character, is a constant lesson to his generation. Whether in silence or in speech, he enforces, by virtue of his example, the reality of the noblest ideals.

The highest enjoyment of life has little relation to the ordinary surroundings of ease and comfort. It comes rather from a consciousness of ability to suffer and endure and accomplish; from the feeling that one is filling a man's place, doing a man's work, earning a man's wages. Probably no life is fully happy that has not in it some real surrender; which has not drank some cup of experience to the dregs; spent itself in some great service. Only a great life can know of life's great resources and its great rewards. A definite and worthy object is the surest protection from the sorrows that ebb and flow about the pathway of men. It is work, not ease and comfort that is the greatest joy of living, especially if that work have a noble purpose.

Who can rightly measure the influence of those great characters of the past who arose in the intellectual gloom of an earlier time and became instrumental in lifting the race to a higher plane, heralding the dawn of a better era, who left the impress of their word and deed to bless the coming ages. Each receding wave as it swept into the dim unknown has transmitted that influence to the following wave with an added force, and those great characters of the past have been immortalized by the imitation and adoration of the wise and good of the succeeding generations.

But patriotism in its higher sense is more than a mere sentiment. The qualities which go to make up the true patriot must be lived, not merely professed; they must be felt not merely talked about. Good deeds must be done and done with proper motives, not merely admired and praised when done by others.

We cannot be ciphers in life's battle, though some of us come mighty near it. All men have an influence on all other men. We are a part of our environment and act upon and are acted upon by it. Neither can we escape from our surroundings, nor our responsibilities without treason to society. We are bound to perform our share of the world's work in whatever position we are placed. What that work is we may not always know, nor yet our relation to it, or our share in it, but we are doing it nevertheless.

The laborer who operates the Jacquard loom merely moves the beam to and fro. He knows nothing of the quality of the work that is being done, nor why he is chosen for so simple a task. He can see only the seamy side of the fabric that grows and rolls up before him. A more acute intellect has traced the model; a trained hand has set the warp; a practised eye has regulated the pattern of which the workman knows nothing. It is only when the web is complete and opened to the light that he can see the beauty of form and harmony of color that he has wrought.

A keener intellect than ours has modelled the world's destiny and we are here, each in his place to do his part to make or mar that destiny, to hasten or delay its accomplish-

ment. From the wilderness of Midian of 3,400 years ago to the African wilderness of to-day men have been chosen by a power above them to work out the plans of the Great Architect and that He has guided them is shown in the character and result of their labors. Cromwell and Hampden, and Sidney and Washington and Havelock and Lincoln and Gordon and Stanley were thus chosen and guided and the world is better that they have lived.

Men who take counsel of their fears are of little real account in the world. They magnify obstacles and minify helps. There are lions in the way and they never come near enough to see the chains that render them harmless. Shadows seem substantial and dreams realities. God seems far away and the devil is ever at the elbow. Men thus moved and acted upon are cowards, without confidence in themselves, faith in their fellows, or trust in God. In great emergencies they are ciphers. When men are needed they never come forward and are never thought of.

There is nothing in science, or philosophy, or business, or society, to amend or strengthen such characters. No mere mental process will avail. There are depths in our nature which philosophy has not sounded, heights which science has not scaled.

The ten spies saw only the giants, the roaring torrents and the walled cities and their hearts became as water. Caleb and Joshua saw the same obstacle and gave to them their full force and effect, but they saw also

> "God standing in the shadow,
> Keeping watch above his own,"

and would go forward.

After all, this is the great secret of the difference in men. He who knows only the secrets of nature as revealed by science, and the relation of things only as disclosed by the reasoning of the philosophers is but half developed. This world, where he can remain but a few years at best, limits his vision, contains all his hopes, circumscribes his ambitions. When it glides from beneath his feet all is gone. He has no

other possession, no other standpoint. The bludgeon of the assassin may destroy him utterly. Disease wipes him out as with a sponge. If he have courage in danger it is but the courage of pride. Of real moral courage and its source he has no conception.

Genuine courage is that which sustains men in misfortune, in unmerited disgrace, in misery and pain and sickness, and holds them true to their higher nature and to God, and it comes only to those whose hope and faith are stayed on Him.

The brave man ranges himself on the right side when it costs something to do so, while the coward lies in ambush and throws stones. When the right prevails, as it always does, sooner or later, the cowards come out of their cover, fill the front seats and boast of the virtue they had ridiculed and persecuted.

The thumb screw and the rack of the 17th century would have utterly destroyed the virtue that is the glory of the 19th but for those stern men for whom pain and death had no terrors, and whose iron will no torture could bend. The real heroes of the past are those who stood alone for the right, their only support that clairvoyant vision of the future, that golden beam of justice, the perfect revelation of God's design.

Such men regard not the verdict of the world, if that verdict be wrong. They care nothing for the applause of men if it can only be won at the expense of integrity and self-respect, and manhood and virtue. It is those who have exemplified that high courage to whom the world at last gives its highest honors, and its most enduring memory.

The world's verdict of to-day is not what it was last year, nor what it will be next year. "Hail" and "Hosanna," to-day, and "Crucify Him," to-morrow is a fair sample of the uncertainty of that which men call "public sentiment."

Washington was jeered, and hooted and almost mobbed in a street of the national capital because he would not yield to a public sentiment which clamored for a breach of the national honor. Men of such character, no matter how humble, wield an influence the world dreams not of until it has borne fruit.

The condition and needs of the race offer an unlimited field for the display of all that is best in men. In ministry to the suffering, in searching after nature's secrets, in the spread of our civilization, in teaching the true spirit of freedom, there opens up a field in which are abundant opportunities to develop and arouse the highest qualities of which the human soul is capable. It is only those who have been thus developed who have shown themselves equal to the greatest efforts and sacrifices.

Companions and friends, if what I have said here to-night shall have the effect to induce you to look upon the higher duties and responsibilities of life as of binding obligation, my purpose will be accomplished, and nothing save the parting word remains to be spoken.

We meet here but to part. We shall probably never all meet again. There is no eternal meeting save that which unites those whose memories we cherish. In peace they rest till the last trumpet shall sound the assembly on the eternal morning. Then shall the dead of both armies come to the call:

"These in the robings of glory
Those in the gloom of defeat;
All in the battle blood gory,
In the dusk of eternity meet."

Those who wore the blue and those who wore the gray shall meet again, face to face, enemies no more but, reconciled at last by the soothing influence of the long rest in the grave. And while Omnipotence itself is powerless to make the right wrong, or the wrong right, yet in the incomparable glory of that upper world we shall know as we are known, and neither the paeans of our victory nor the lamentations of their defeat shall mar the eternal harmony.

"Then let us toil with arms unstained
That at last we may be worthy to stand
On the shining heights they've gained.
We shall meet them and greet in closing ranks
In Time's declining sun,
When the bugles of God shall sound a recall,
And the battle of life be won."

ADDRESS OF
COMPANION WILLIAM R. COLLINS.

This beautiful service is dedicated to the memory of those of our Commandery who have died during the past year. In the month of May, in some House of God, we annually assemble to pay a mark of tribute to the memory of those whose names are inscribed on our ever increasing roll that have passed to the great beyond.

But in a larger sense, we are here, not only to pay tribute to those who have died during the past year, but to those who fell in the great struggle; to those who have died since the war; and to those who are still permitted to be with us to enjoy the blessings of life.

Every memorial service of this character is a tribute to the great cause, for which so many gave their last full measure of devotion.

Scattered throughout the world, are some forty-five recognized Orders. In many countries they are only permitted to decorate the nobility, those, who by birth, have at once inherited superior advantages and opportunities.

In many other countries, it is a mark of distinguished military service, gained as the contending armies of Europe have marched against each other and drenched their countries in blood; gained in the fierce battles that have changed the map of the World.

In this country, we have but three. The Order of the Cincinnati, the Grand Army of the Republic, and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion.

They are founded on American Patrotism. A patrotism, not of religious fanaticism, not of love of conquest and of power; but of loftier and nobler, the love of home, the love of liberty and the love of justice. The War of the Revolution

was not a war of conquest—it was a war in defense of the American home; it was a war against oppression; against injustice and unjust taxation.

The Minute Man, as he stood on the banks of the Concord, and met the trained British Soldier, little realized that his shot would be heard around the world. And as the sturdy Sons of Liberty rose up to cast off a great power, they established on this continent of ours, a new principle in the government of nations, that found expression in the Declaration of Independence.

A principle that said that all men in the eyes of the law, are created equal. That they have certain rights for the protection of which governments are instituted among men deriving their just power from the consent of the governed.

And when the war was over, and a new nation was established; when Washington met his fellow officers in a tearful farewell, they established the order of the Cincinnati, named after that brave old Roman "Cincinnatus," who had quitted his plow, as they had done, to engage in war, but who returned to the pursuits of peace when the war was over.

The War of the Rebellion was in defense of those same principles. Standing on the battle field of Gettysburg, in 1863, Abraham Lincoln, said:

"Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any other nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure."

To-night in the fullness of national greatness; of unbounded commercial prosperity; of unlimited wealth and opportunity, we are glad to feel that this proposition has stood the test of time. We are glad to feel that out of the great crisis, has come a united country, under one flag, beloved at home, and honored and respected abroad.

In a debate in Congress, James A. Garfield, once said:

"In 1620 there was planted in this country, two ideas hostile to each other. The one at Plymouth Rock from the May Flower, the other from a

Dutch Brig at Jamestown, Virginia. One was a doctrine of Luther, that private judgment in politics as well as religion was the right of every man; the other, that capital should own labor.

For two centuries there was no serious collision, but when Roundhead and Cavalier began to jostle each other, near enough to measure opinions, the two doctrines began to appear."

It was this doctrine that brought on our Civil War. For years collision was avoided, but when the stirring eloquence of Daniel Webster began to plead for liberty and union, when our territory began to expand further and further westward, when the leaders of the two ideas began to struggle for that rich and fertile territory that lay beyond the Mississippi, the people saw the danger. Fierce were the debates in Congress. Bitter was the feeling between the states rights and national sovereignty. But when the war became inevitable, we had loyal and brave men in the North; men who rallied to the support of their country; men who marched away to the stirring drum beat of the nation. The issue was firmly met. From cruel war came a united nation; and when peace was o'er the land, and a race set free, and the volunteer soldier had returned to the pursuits of peace, these were the men, who to-day wear the emblem of the Grand Army of the Republic, and the badge of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion.

For some time we have been permitted, as a younger generation to meet with the Loyal Legion by right of inheritance. I am here to speak for the members of the second class. As time goes on, our members will increase. Few among us to-day are entitled to become members of the Order of the Cincinnati. The Grand Army of the Republic have thus far not extended their privileges of membership to sons of Veterans, and it remains for us, as the second generation, to hand down, not the bitterness, but the tender memories of the Civil War to the succeeding generation.

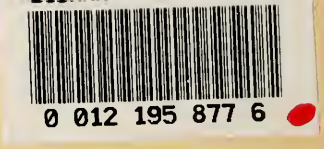
But there is another thought. It has been said that on the 6th of December, 1863, while anchored off Morris Island, Admiral Dahlgren, from his flag-ship, the "Philadelphia," observed from his squadron a sinking iron clad. There had been no battle; the sea was calm, still the "Weehawken"

was sinking, and no one could tell the reason. She had been foremost in the struggle for the recapture of Fort Sumter. She had been active in the campaign off Charleston Harbor. She had aided in the capture of Fort Wagner. From the mystery of that December day, it was discovered that her plates had became loosened, her hull strained, and she sank from the weakness of her previous great service. And the thought comes to us to-night that the old soldiers of the War of the Rebellion are rapidly passing away, many of them before their time. They too, are sinking from the weakness of the previous great service. Many carry to their graves the scars of battle, and many, many more have patiently gone on in the years that have followed the war struggling against disease incurred in the long marches, the great exposures and the weary hospitals of pain. The 30th of May is set apart as National Memorial Day. In a few weeks we will see the veterans bearing their tattered battle flags, marching to the cemeteries to scatter flowers over the graves of the dead. One of the beautiful things we see on Decoration Day is the thousands of little school children marching in the memorial parade. They are early learning the inspirations of patriotism that caused so many to enlist to battle for the Union. Throughout the land are more lasting memorials. Every large city in the North has some monument, some building to honor those who served in the War of the Rebellion. Only a short time ago the people of this county voted $250,000.00 for a memorial building to commemorate Cincinnati in the war.

But memorial day is not only observed throughout the North, but in the South as well. On the great battle fields, now National Parks, will come on Decoration Day, the sons and daughters of the Southland, who will scatter flowers with an impartial hand alike for the Blue and the Gray.

"No more shall the war cry sever
Or the winding rivers be red
They banish our anger forever
When they laurel the graves of our dead."

We have already lived to see the boys of the North and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the boys of the South march out together, shoulder to shoulder, under one flag to meet the enemies of our common country. We saw them camped side by side under the same banner, where thirty-six years before their fathers fought the great battle of Chickamauga, and we saw a great army corps march into Havana led by General Fitzhugh Lee, of Virginia, with General J. Warren Keifer, of this Commandery, second in command.

We have lived to carry out the principle of Abraham Lincoln, "with malice towards none and charity for all." We know no North, no South, no East, no West; we are one united country.

So to-night as we close this service let us resolve to keep green the memory of our honored dead. With but one exception, every name on our long roll this year, is the name of some officer of the War of the Rebellion, who shared in the glories and the hardships of the great struggle. We are glad to feel that they were spared to return from that war. They have lived through a great era in the history of our country, and now in the autumn of their lives, they have laid their burdens down.

"The muffled drum's last beat is heard,
The Soldier's last tattoo,
No more on life's parade shall meet,
That brave and fallen few.
On Fame's immortal camping ground,
Their silent tents are spread,
While glory waits with solemn round
The bivouac of the dead."